

The EAGLE

For the employees of the Coatesville VA Medical Center ~ Spring 2010


A Message From the Director



Dear fellow employees:

I am pleased to be writing to you as the spring weather is upon us. As you all know, we experienced the snowiest winter ever recorded in the Philadelphia area, having received more than 70 inches of snow. This significant snow fall presented all of us with various obstacles in digging out, dealing with children home from school and getting in to work. Once all that was done, there were many more challenges to contend with.

I want to thank each and every one of you who made it to work in the midst of the bad weather. I also want to thank all of you who stayed here overnight and those who worked double shifts and extra hours. It is in times like these that I am reminded of your dedication to the Veterans we are here to serve.


Gary W. Devansky
Director

Welcome, Denise O'Donnell



Denise O'Donnell joined CVAMC as the director of Geriatrics & Extended Care in November. Interestingly, she also worked in Geriatrics & Extended Care at CVAMC in the 1980s as a gerontological clinical nurse specialist. She also worked at Pittsburgh VA Healthcare System and Maryland VA Healthcare System. For the past 19 years, she has worked as a director of nursing, educator, consultant and nursing home administrator.

Ms. O'Donnell graduated with her bachelors of science degree in Nursing from Duquesne University and earned her Master's Degree in Gerontological Nursing from the University of California, Los Angeles and is currently working on her Master's in Aging Service Management from the University of Southern California.

Ms. O'Donnell looks forward to continuing the cultural transformation changes that have been taking place in the CVAMC Community Living Center. She is grateful for the opportunity to serve Veterans and considers it a way to say thank you for their service.

Welcome, Dr. Eugene Goldman

Dr. Eugene Goldman is the associate chief of staff for Education and Staff Development. He came to Coatesville VAMC from the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System where he served as both the associate chief of staff for Education and chief of Podiatry.

Dr. Goldman graduated from Hofstra University on Long Island, NY and attended the California College of Podiatric Medicine in San Francisco where he received his podiatric medical degree. He completed his surgical residency at the San Francisco VAMC. He has lived and worked in many places across the country including Tuscon and Phoenix, Arizona and Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. Goldman graduated from VHA's Executive Career Field Candidate Development Program on March 25, 2010. He hopes to help CVAMC distinguish itself as a leader in learning and leadership within the Department of Veterans Affairs. He moved to the area with his wife and son and is building a new home in West Chester.



2010 VISN 4 Employee and Staff Development Participants

Education and Staff Development is happy to announce that Lori Kutcher, Connie Vincenzini and Orin Foster will be CVAMC's VISN 4 LEAD (Leadership Effectiveness Accountability Development)

Program participants. The purpose of the six month, intensive training program is to develop candidates' leadership talent and core competency skills. Candidates were chosen based on their "high potential" characteristics including model organizational values, commitment to skill and career development, and positive communication practices.

Additionally, Laura Sarmento, Carolyn Riddle and Kathleen Pomorski will be participating in LDI or Leadership Development Institute. This similar program lasts for one year and is targeted to key leadership personnel in VISN 4. Dr. Michael Gliatto is participating in VISN 4's Network Executive Health Care Leadership Institute. This is a cutting-edge executive development program that has been specifically designed to stretch and challenge participants as leaders.

Congratulations to the 2009 graduates: Bernice Ridgel, Debbie Elmer, Kim Pouncy and Patricia Norwood graduated from the LEAD Program. Michael Carcanague graduated from the LDI Program and Tony Wolfgang graduated from the NECHLI Program.

Congratulations and good luck to all!

CVAMC opens doors to PA Army National Guard for Post Deployment Health Reassessment Activity

On February 28, Coatesville VAMC opened our doors to hundreds of soldiers of the Pennsylvania 56th Stryker Brigade who returned to the states in August and September, 2009. They were here to complete a Department of Defense required Post-Deployment Health Reassessment Activity (PDHRA) which took place during their scheduled drill weekend. PDHRAs had also been taking place at all of the other VISN 4 medical centers in Pennsylvania, including Philadelphia VAMC, whose events took place the same weekend. In all, CVAMC hosted 317 soldiers.

The event gave soldiers the opportunity to work with health care providers to identify potential health issues and treat known health problems before they affect a person's future deployment status or career. According to DoD officials, many deployment-related health problems may not arise until three to six months after a soldier returns from deployment which is why the event was scheduled at this time.

"This is a great opportunity to partner with the VA and help these soldiers with their transition," said Lt. Col. Chris Cleaver, a Pennsylvania National Guard spokesman. "It's all about doing the right thing for them and linking them up with the support agencies they may need."

The program also provided an opportunity for these men and women to learn about and take charge of their VA health care benefits. Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan are entitled to five years of VA health care for conditions which may be related to their deployments. VA staff provided information on VA benefits, helped schedule follow-up appointments, and enrolled troops in VA health care.

"At VA, it is our job to reach each and every returning service member," said Gary W. Devansky, Coatesville VA Medical Center Director. "We are pleased to team with the Pennsylvania National Guard to make these Soldiers' introduction to VA health care as beneficial as possible."

The soldiers are part of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's 56th Stryker Brigade which has elements in Philadelphia and at armories across the state. Of the seven U.S. Army units assigned the Stryker mission, the 56th is the only one in the National Guard. The Iraq mission marked the largest Pennsylvania National Guard deployment since World War II. Thank you to the many employee volunteers who helped to run the event – there were 79 in all.



Did You Know that Citadel Federal Credit Union Has Special Offers for CVAMC Employees?

Many Veterans and employees take advantage of banking at Citadel Federal Credit Union. A branch is conveniently located on the CVAMC campus, Building 4, Room B12 and is open Tuesdays and Fridays from 8am until 4:30pm (closed from 1pm to 2pm). Citadel FCU has much more to offer Veterans and VA employees than just a convenient location.

At the CVAMC branch, in addition to cashing checks and making deposits, members may also apply for home equity, auto, or mortgage loans (refinance or first home purchase). Citadel offers discounted rates on auto, home and renter's insurance and some special CD rates exclusive to VA employees and Veterans. Citadel also provides free investment and retirement advice and educational seminars.

Unlike a traditional bank, Citadel Federal Credit Union is a community-based, not for profit entity that believes in the value of "people helping people". They don't answer to shareholders, only to loyal members. Utilizing Citadel FCU services through the branch in Building 4 will help ensure Citadel's ability to continue its operations here. Our Veteran patients depend on the credit union being on our grounds.

To reach the VA branch of Citadel Federal Credit Union on Tuesdays and Fridays, please call 610-384-3328, or 610-384-3315. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, questions can be directed to Doug Thompson at 610-380-6000, extension 6412.

To learn more about Citadel FCU, consider attending one of the following upcoming special events:

Enrollment Day

Tuesday, April 6th

Come to the Oval II picnic pavilion area (outside of Building 9) from 11am to 2pm
Enrollment information and soft pretzels

One-on-One Meetings

Tuesday, April 13th

Building 38, Room 205
8:30am until noon

Educational Seminars (20 minute workshops with 10 minute Q&A afterward)

Thursday, April 8th

Building 38, Room 205

Topics to include:

Maximizing Your Savings for Retirement 11am and 1pm

Debt Consolidation with Mortgages and Home Equity Loans 12pm and 2pm

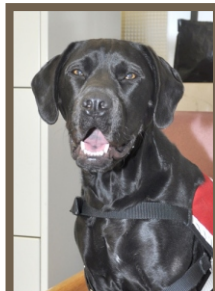
Light refreshments will be served.

Please consult with your supervisor if you plan to attend any of these events

Meet privately with Financial Advisor Dave Layo to review your retirement plans, IRA and personal financial situation.

Meet privately with Financial Representative Melynda Wagner about membership, loan options and debt consolidation.

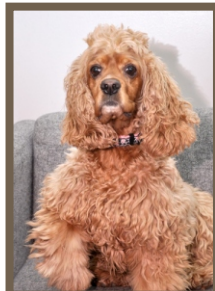
Please set up an appointment ahead of time by contacting Melynda at melyndawagner@citadelfcu.org or 610-380-6062.



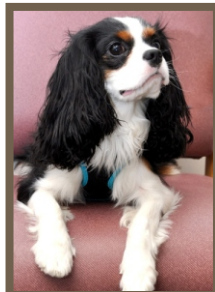
Cooper



Tucker



Shorty



Dobby

PET THERAPY AT CVAMC!

Submitted by Cheryl Lauroto



Have you seen our special pet "volunteers" on campus? They are here spreading love and joy to our Veterans and staff. All they want in return is a scratch behind the ears and some treats now and then.

Research has shown that pets have a comforting presence and are sensitive to those not feeling well. They provide companionship and can lower stress and depression and increase self-esteem. Patients in nursing homes and clinical settings experience less anxiety and improved moods with pet therapy. Don't you just love those puppy kisses?

There are currently four employee-owned dogs participating in the therapy program at CVAMC. Cooper is the mild mannered volunteer owned by Jim and Melanie Rogers, recreation therapists. He is often seen gathering treats from the staff in Building 7. Tucker is the proud pet of Sharon Hottel, kinesiotherapist, and concentrates on comforting our Community Living Center residents. Our Oval II volunteer is Shorty, the sweet Cocker Spaniel owned by Angela Campbell, recreation therapist. Dobby, the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel owned by Cheryl Lauroto, nurse case manager, warms the hearts of the residents and staff of the Mary Walker House and Fresh Start.

Here are some of the comments elicited from resident Veterans about our four-legged tail waggers:

"They brighten my day and bring joy in my heart" J.B.

"They turn my frowns upside down and every day is a good day when I see them" N.H.

"Pets give love when we need some" D.W.

"They always give positive, loving feedback" P.H.

"Pets are a true joy to my life. They open up my eyes. They are warm and affectionate. They are like my best friend" D.S.

So if you see our little friends around, give them a little thanks with a pat on the back.

If you have a pet and are interested in becoming involved, please contact Jennifer Koehler at extension 5265. She facilitates the screening process to verify the appropriateness of the animal for the program.



Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure

Sunday, May 9th
Philadelphia

Many CVAMC employees will come together to walk for a good cause breast cancer. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Claesa Whitfield at extension 6204.

CVAMC employees mourn the loss of Robert Brown, Jacqu'lin Livingston, Eleonor Rodriguez, David Turner and Dr. Harold Wells. Memorial services were held to recognize and honor these dedicated employees.



Good News

Mary Eil's son, Special Agent Jim Tarasca was deployed to Afghanistan in December. He is a member of the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team.

Congratulations to Health Administration Service whose float placed #1 in this year's Veterans Week parade.

An-Nisa Knight, HR specialist, recently became engaged to Jason James.

During this holiday season, the Director's Office collected and donated \$300 to the Coatesville Food Cupboard.

Congratulations to Lori Ford who welcomed baby Leeya Jane Ford on March 9, 2010 who weighed in at 6lbs, 8oz. Proud grandma Norma Ford is really enjoying her new grandchild.

In March, Mr. Albert Newman of the Department of Defense's Office for Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve presented the staff of 1B Medical Unit with an award honoring them for patriotic support of employee Darlene Walls during her recent military deployment.

Dr. Warren S. Joseph, CVAMC's podiatrist and editor of the Journal of the American Podiatric Association, has been selected as the 2010 honoree for the Edward James Olmos Award for Amputation Prevention.

Robin Aube-Warren and Dr. Eugene Goldman graduated from VHA's Executive Career Field Candidate Development Program in March.

In February, Richard Gamble, CVAMC's long-time patient advocate, was honored by the West Chester Veterans' Council of the Chapel of Four Chaplains with the Legion of Honor Award. The Chapel of Four Chaplains seeks to encourage observation of the unity which binds together Americans of all faiths. Patriotic in its nature, the Chapel celebrates the characteristic generosity, devotion to God and country, and love of fellowman which we share in common.

During WWII, four chaplains of four different faiths and hundreds of men on board a US Navy ship drowned as a result of being torpedoed. Survivors report that, as the ship was sinking, the chaplains moved among the men to calm and comfort them. When the supply of lifejackets was exhausted all four chaplains took off their own lifejackets and gave them to soldiers who had none. When the Four Chaplains were last seen, their arms were linked as they knelt and prayed.

The *Legion of Honor Award* is presented for service to the local community. Mr. Gamble also received a congratulatory certificate in recognition of this honor by Pennsylvania State Senators Andrew E. Dinniman and Jeffrey E. Piccola.

Got Patient Safety Issues?? Then Speak Up!!

If you have identified a patient safety issue you have several options.

- 1.) Notify your supervisor
- 2.) Have a work order entered
- 3.) Contact a Patient Safety Manager (Lyn Ordonez at extension 3831 or Flavel Rogers at extension 2119)
- 4.) Call the Patient Safety Hotline at extension 7642 (this can be anonymous).

Congratulations to our staff!

Coatesville VA Medical Center received a Silver RCA (Root Cause Analysis) Cornerstone Recognition Award for 2009 from the National Center for Patient Safety. The award is based on specific criteria focused on quality, timeliness and the quantity of RCA's. We want to thank all of our employees who participated on RCA teams in 2009 - we appreciate your hard work. We are going for the gold in 2010!

National Patient Safety Goals

Joint Commission published the 2010 National Patient Safety Goals. Goal #1 is improving the accuracy of patient identification. The intent of this goal is to reliably identify the patient as the person for whom service or treatment is intended throughout the continuum of care. At CVAMC patient identification consists of minimally two complete identifiers (FULL name and FULL social security number OR FULL name and FULL date of birth). If the social security number is used as an identifier - it must contain the entire social security number, not the last four numbers. Please review the entire list of National Patient Safety Goals. These goals are posted throughout the medical center and pocket cards are being distributed to each department.

To staff of the PTSD Residential Unit:

It is with great sincerity that I write you all, and acknowledge my gratitude for what you've done for me. It is not often that one gets an entire staff dedicated to his rehabilitation, and so accommodating to his needs. I consider you to be friends that helped me when I was most in need. My hope is that you understand my deepest gratitude and that you continue to do for the future Veterans, as you have done for me. I sincerely believe you all have earned your rank as a top PTSD treatment facility, and wish the best blessings for your futures.

Sincerely,
A Veteran

All Employee Survey



It's that time again. The 2010 VA All Employee Survey is coming! It will be available for you to complete

online or by telephone from April 19 through May 10, 2010. The purpose of this VHA-wide survey is to collect information on your perceptions of our work place and your job satisfaction. Last year, 79% of CVAMC employees completed this important survey and many of you helped to create workgroup action plans to improve satisfaction. Last year's results and plans are on our intranet site. The only way to know if satisfaction has improved is to take this year's survey and compare the results. We hope you will take time again this year to give us your valuable input through this confidential, anonymous and voluntary survey. Questions should go to Joanne Renz at 4390.

Parking Reminders

Handicapped parking spaces are to be used only by handicapped persons who display a handicapped placard or have a disability license plate while parked. Please be respectful of those who legitimately need to use these spaces and do not park there if you are not authorized to do so. This applies even when running into a building to quickly drop something off.

Please also remember that when you see a cone blocking a parking space, it is reserved for a visitor.. Even if it is not taken in the morning hours, it is still reserved for a scheduled visitor. If you have any questions, please call extension 4222 and ask to speak to a patrol officer.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

The need is constant.
The gratification is instant. Give Blood™.

April 16th, July 16th, October 15th. To sign up, use COAVISTA and enter BLOOD at the prompt. Anyone who donates will be eligible for a drawing for one of two reserved parking spaces and other prizes provided by American Red Cross Penn-Jersey Blood Services Region. Any questions should be directed to Jeff Fitzsimons at extension 2233.

SERVICE AWARDS

Congratulations to the following employees who have been recognized for 20 or more years of service between November and March

20 years:

Daniel Dacey
Blaine Gerald
Brent Martin
Bernice Ridgel
Deborah Sutton

25 years:

John Campbell
Arthur Daggett
Thomas Folks
Phyllis James
William Luff
Mary Myers
Cynthia Owens
Helen Ramaley
Joseph Smith

30 years:

Helen Baker
Lawrence Brown
Raymond Dennison
Andrew Fischer
Keith Hale
Robert Krupansky
Christine Milligan
Donald Pavelik
Ella Perry
Joanne Renz
David Rice
Helene Reitman
Dorothy Washington
Kathleen Witherow
Richard Wood

35 years:

Sondra Davis
Nicholas Vitto

40 years:

Thomas Middleton
Linda Whittington
Samuel Wiggins

Employee of the Month

October: Yunchiae (Amy) Lu	November: Darla Smith	December: John Lehr	January: Ann Migdal	February: Rosalind Phillips	March: James Garry
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Supervisor of the Month

October: Dr. Dow	November: Raquel Stump	December: Cecilya Glover	January: Beth Kennel	February: Jacqueline McCloud	March: Judi Graziano
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Employee Name:

Years of Service:

Good Bye & Good Luck to our Retirees

Sharon Goldie	41	Jacqueline Peters	30
Roberta London	41	Nancy Reece	30
Pamela Hudson	39	Queen Folks	29
Eileen Sama	38	James Esch	17

The Eagle is published quarterly for the employees of the Coatesville VA Medical Center.

Please address suggestions, comments, or story ideas to: Kathleen Pomorski X4203 or kathleen.pomorski@va.gov. The editor reserves the right to make changes and/or edits to any submission chosen for publication.

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